

CWD UPDATE

JANUARY 10, 2003

Nebraska has received the results from 1,844 ELISA tests from the over 4,000 samples collected during the fall of 2002. Of these results, 1,842 were not positive with 2 additional positives. One of the positives was from Kimball County, within a mile of both Colorado and Wyoming and the other was from northern Sioux County, within the endemic area there. These samples will be rerun using the IHC test to verify the positive reading.

Saskatchewan has confirmed a seventh case of CWD in wild cervids. The latest case is from a 2-½ year old white tail deer taken by a hunter just north of Lloydminster, near the town of Paradise Hill. The other Saskatchewan cases have been in the Manito Sandhills south of Lloydminster and near Saskatchewan Landing Provincial Park northwest of Swift Current.

Illinois has confirmed CWD in three additional whitetail deer. This brings the total for this state to 7 cases. The new cases were two from McHenry County and one from Boone County. All 7 cases are from the area just south of the Wisconsin border in the extreme northern portion of Illinois.

On January 1, 2003, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection took over regulating deer farms in that state from the Department of Natural Resources. This transfer comes as state officials implement new rules and regulations to slow the spread of chronic wasting disease in wild and captive cervids.

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department has confirmed a third case of CWD in Carbon County, east of Arlington and south of Interstate 80. This is from a hunter-harvested mule deer during this fall hunting season. Other cases have been found in the endemic area but this is a new area of infection found this fall.

Iowa State University has started an online course on Wildlife Disease. This course is basically a course on foreign animal diseases and covers the recognition and prevention of exotic animal diseases. CWD just gets a passing mention in the section Feline Spongiform Encephalopathy. Information on the course can be found at <http://www.vetmed.iastate.edu/services/institutes/iicab/fad/main.htm>

Tests conducted on hunter-harvested animals from Colorado now number more than 23,600. Of these, 175 animals have tested positive, most from the endemic area. However, 46 positive tests were from outside the endemic area as the finding of the disease continues to spread in northern Colorado. In early December, three CWD-positive elk were reported from western Colorado. The positive tests came from a cow elk killed Nov. 9 northeast of Kremmling, a cow elk taken Nov. 12 northwest of Meeker and a bull elk killed Oct. 6 north of Rangely. A map of the locations of these findings in Colorado can be found at http://wildlifes.state.co.us/CWD/Detected_CWDMap.jpg

USDA-APHIS has released additional CCC funds to assist states in paying for CWD surveillance during the past hunting season. To qualify, states must have submitted a surveillance plan and the tests must be run at an APHIS partner laboratory. This is in addition to the limited funding provided by the USFWS through the state grants program administered by IAFWA.

Rocky Mountain National Park has received a \$450,000 grant to study CWD in the park. They plan on trapping as many deer as possible and conducting the ante mortem live animal test on the tonsils. The deer will be radio collared to enable biologists to locate and remove any animal testing positive. Since there is no live test for elk, the Park's elk population will not be included in this study.

The Wisconsin DNR has received approval for a stepped up plan to eliminate deer from the eradication zone around Mount Horeb. The Wisconsin commission approved plans that will permit limited baiting of deer in the eradication zone by landowners and will also permit nighttime hunting by government sharpshooters. Bait to be used will be provided by the DNR, permits will be issued and DNR employees will approve bait sites. Additionally, the new plan calls for extending the landowner hunting permits in the zone until the end of March. After that, government sharpshooters may be used to reduce deer densities.

The State of Pennsylvania has lifted their ban on the import of deer and elk. The new rules, awaiting approval by the state Attorney General, would require that any cervid imported from a state or province with CWD be from a herd that has been monitored for five years and any other cervid imported come from a herd that has been monitored for at least three years. All imports would require a state importation permit and must be accompanied by a certificate of veterinary inspection.

All the deer from a game farm in Walworth County, Wisconsin game farm have been tested for CWD. Officials depopulated 118 deer from the farm late last year. A doe from this farm had tested positive in September and so had another animal that had escaped and was shot while outside the fence. An additional four animals from the 118 depopulated have now tested positive for a total of six from this facility. The farm has been cleaned and disinfected and will remain under quarantine for deer and elk for at least a year. Other species may be introduced into the facility. The owner has received indemnity for his animals at the rate of \$1,500 per animal minus storage and disposal costs.

ADDENDUM TO CWD UPDATE 27

January 10, 2003

The Wisconsin DNR has reported finding five positive CWD deer in the Management Zone but outside the eradication zone. Four were in Iowa County and one in Richland County. DNR officials stated that they were not surprised by these findings and that this information is consistent with the pattern of positives found within the eradication zone. CWD is still limited to a small geographic area of southwest Wisconsin according to the latest findings. Results from Grant and Marathon counties continue to be released and, to date, there are no positives and no credible evidence that CWD is present in these counties. DNR will continue targeted surveillance in the management zone to collect additional samples in the areas where the latest positive deer were taken.